

11/14/2024 CCSD Board Meeting

Good afternoon President Gray and Directors,

In view of changing climate conditions and the onset of winter, I wanted to know if there is a plan and a timetable for the removal and relocation of the CCSD's buildings on the Rodeo Grounds, in view of the fact that they are currently situated in a flood plain.

I am glad that the County graded the road leading to the Rodeo Grounds but frankly that fails to meet what is needed. As this road is used frequently, not only by the public but by the CCSD vehicles, I would like to see increased pressure put on the County to pave this properly.

With the wildfires that are taking place close to us, I am concerned about the ongoing servicing of our town's fire hydrants. I would like to know the planned frequency that is currently scheduled. I am sure there is a spreadsheet showing the current status of all the hydrants and I would be most interested if this could be provided on your website.

Many thanks,

Tony Church

From: [Christine Heinrichs](#)
To: [BoardComment](#)
Subject: Written comment November 14 2024
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2024 8:54:38 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Has the funding for the Peoples Self Help Housing Project, been approved?

In July, Peoples Self Help Housing CEO & President Ken Trigueiro assured the board that a decision would be made on the re-application for Tax Credit Allocation in October. That would provide a route to funding for the Peoples Self Help Housing project in Cambria. Has that been approved? If not, what is the path forward on that housing project?

PUBLIC COMMENT

Apparently Mr. Mcelhenie misunderstands my position regarding the Coastal Development Permit for the EWs/SWF/WRF. At the October 21 Vets Hall meeting, he said that he knows that I am opposed to approving the CDP. That is not true. I have worked to support the district in getting the CDP approved. My frustration is that the district continues to pursue actions that will never lead to CDP approval.

I opposed construction of the plant. Following its troubled history since 2014, I will accept some credit for accurately foreseeing its future.

Once constructed, though, I have always hoped that the district would follow the advice of its Strategic Advisor, former SLO County Public Works Director Paavo Ogren, who was hired specifically to advise the district as to how to proceed to get CDP approval. I've suggested to you and the board before that you listen to Mr. Ogren's report, at the November 21, 2019 meeting, https://slo-span.org/meeting/ccsd_20191121/.

In that meeting, he explains why describing the project to allow for adding future connections will make it difficult to get a CDP approved. After hearing his presentation, the board directed staff to write a project description to provide for existing users only.

Instead, staff brought the board a project description for adding users. The board, at its June 25 2020 Special Meeting, chose not to change that. https://slo-span.org/meeting/ccsd_20200625/

As Mr. Ogren predicted, that description continues to prove difficult if not impossible for the County or the Coastal Commission to approve.

This has been the case since 2020. I have requested that the district do the biological studies, which the County and Coastal Commission require, to complete the application. I've drawn attention to other requirements, now listed in the County's Information Hold and the Coastal Commission's letter.

I have no influence on whether the CDP is approved. This is entirely up to the board and staff. The fact that the CDP is out of reach has nothing to do with me. Mr. McElhenie's request to the Coastal Commission to compile all of my and Tina Dickason's emails over the past ten years wasted the Commission's time producing it. It's also a waste of Mr. McElhenie's time to read them. If he wants to know what is required in the CDP application, he has the county's and the Commission's documents. Reading my emails is not going to guide the staff to complete the application.

That's a choice that the staff continues to make. I ask the board to take whatever action it can to direct staff to complete this CDP application. That could require returning to Mr. Ogren's recommendation that operating the plant be limited to existing users. If you want to get this CDP approved, that's what your advisor told you.

If not, please abandon this expensive, non-functional project, so that the district can use that time and money on projects that will benefit the community. Thank you.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Thank you, Mr. McElhenie, for linking to the biological studies in the report dated October 2024, which was due in 2022, that form the baseline assessment of threatened species. The baseline is derived from two observations, for two hours, 11:15 am-1:15 pm on August 21, 2024 and two and three quarters hours, 2:00-4:45 pm on October 24, 2024. They didn't see much, see Results page 6. <https://www.cambriacsd.org/files/5032fb6e3/KMA+Cambria+CSD+AMP+Summer-Fall+2024+Monitoring+Report+%28002%29.pdf> I hope Mr. Merk will be available at a public meeting to explain how these two brief observations can form the basis of Adaptive Management for threatened species.

Merk's contract with the district, Item 7A of the April 14, 2022, agenda, see page 75, page 5 of the contract,

<https://www.cambriacsd.org/files/548d6b33d/2022+04+14+Regular+Meeting+Agenda+Packet+Posted.pdf> specifies spending 153 hours over four months on the biological assessments. Does that mean they spent over 140 hours in the office and five in the field? Or were the observations not done? Were they paid the \$85,860 specified in the contract? If not, how much were they paid? Why does Mr. Merk find less than six hours of observation adequate to create a plan to protect these wildlife species?

Two observations seem like the minimum on which to claim "baseline" biological data that forms the basis for Adaptive Management. The biologists saw some tidewater gobies, but no steelhead or red-legged frogs.

No board members have pursued the questions raised by these skimpy biological reports, or other significant gaps in the EWS/SWF/WRF CDP application. To help them, County Planning and the Coastal Commission have pointed out the many gaps:

the County's Information Hold



Maintenance of the creek habitats is essential to protect many coastal resources. These creeks support a number of declining species, such as the Tidewater Goby, Striped Garter Snake, Western Pond Turtle, Red-legged Frog, and Steelhead Trout. b. Please identify how project does not impact these resources.

and the Coastal Commission's letter



we also recommend that long term monitoring begin before and continue after project implementation to ensure that there is adequate baseline data available to determine potential impacts to the surrounding environment.

<https://sanluisobispo-county-ca-energogovweb.tylerhost.net/apps/selfservice#/plan/B2F09E23-07AF-41DC-A9EB-9C98B54FC033?tab=attachments>

Board members are apparently satisfied with the staff's performance in submitting applications which

have no possibility of being approved. They continue to spend money on a project that will never come to fruition.

Another path would be to admit what is, after more than ten years, obvious, and mothball the project, accept that Cambria will never have enough water to add new users, and disband the Water Wait List. Get a negotiator in to resolve claims – this should be straightforward. Cambria has spent millions pursuing the Water Dream. Facts have established that it isn't there.

And allow Cambria to move on to other goals. Cambria can be a model community, a shining light to energy efficiency, zero waste, environmental tourism, affordable housing. So many issues await Cambria's leadership. Cambria's natural setting allows the community to be a jewel. It's out there.

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Christine Heinrichs